

- 4) A Flag icon to flag an item for later reference. Clicking on this adds the item with its hierarchical context (the folders or categories under which it is found) to the flagged entries list. This can also be done by using the menu structure activated by the Hierarchy Action icon. Clicking on the Flag icon again may remove the entry from the list.

This feature assists users by allowing them to collapse hierarchies they have sifted to liberate screen space, while maintaining a reference to items in a collapsed hierarchy of further interest. Where a user only remembers having seen an entry of interest and flagging it, but not the name of the entry or position in a hierarchy, a new search can be specified, with the entries in the favourites list forming a constraint in the scope of the search.

- 5) The Interface also provides the ability to add entries to a favourites list which is a custom hierarchy created by the user. In this way, users can create their own taxonomies which themselves are searchable, as like the flagged entries hierarchy (or any previous search result for that matter), can form the basis of constraining exclusion or inclusions in further searches. Figure 6 shows an item previously added (perhaps using another search) to the Favorites Hierarchy

marked with a star This may be clicked to go to the corresponding entry in the Favorites Hierarchy.

- 6) Each entry has a "Done With Item" checkbox. When checked this removes item details and any open summary or detail box or window, while still leaving the first line of the entry visible. Optionally, it may also change the colour of the done item's text. In this way, the 'Done Item' checkbox allows users to mark off investigated entries, without removing them from view in case later reference to them is required.

an hierarchical data modeller means that extracts locational information from the filtered search results and compiles said search results into output hierarchies based upon the locational information.

- 5 16. The search result reporting engine of claim 15 further comprising a search engine submitter means adapted to accept a search query from a user and to submit the search query to one or more search engines.
17. The search result reporting engine of claim 15 further comprising a Report Renderer means that displays the search results within the output hierarchies.
- 10 18. The search result reporting engine of claim 15 further comprising means for manipulating said hierarchies to collapse, expand, move or flag said search results.
- 15 19. The search result reporting engine of claim 15 further comprising means for adding notes and discussions to search results and/or hierarchies.
20. The search result reporting engine of claim 15 wherein the display means includes means for sorting and prioritising the search results within a display hierarchy or between display hierarchies.
- 20 21. The search result reporting engine of claim 15 further comprising a search engine submitter means adapted to accept a search query from a user and to submit the search query to one or more search engines.
22. The search result reporting engine of claim 21 wherein search engine submitter reformats the search query for each search engine.
- 25 23. The search result reporting engine of claim 15 further comprising a storage means for storage of search results and hierarchies.
24. The search result reporting engine of claim 23 wherein the storage means provide the capacity to merge new results with stored results.
- 30 25. The search result reporting engine of claim 15 wherein the hierarchical data modeller comprises means for extracting location and meta information from a search engine result set; means for compiling the